



## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release:  
Tuesday, October 11, 2005

For more information:  
Jeff Morgan (515) 281-3858

### Vilsack recognizes three pilot Great Places

(IOWA CITY) – Governor Tom Vilsack today will formally recognize three pilot Great Places as part of the Iowa Great Places Conference and Vision in Focus events.

The three pilot places – Clinton, Coon Rapids and Sioux City – were identified last week by the Great Places Citizen Advisory Board. Guttenberg and Central City were designated as alternates. The state will negotiate partnership agreements with the three pilot places to help them achieve their Great Places visions, targeting and streamlining access to existing state resources and programs for maximum impact and leverage.

“In this first year of the Great Places program, we brought 20 different state agencies and the people of Iowa together to redefine the way we work with each other,” Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs Director Anita Walker said. “We knew this first year would be a learning experience, and that’s just what it has been.

“Now, as we gather today to hear from the Governor, we’re going to celebrate all the places that participated in this process. Every community and organization was able to identify the unique, authentic and genuine qualities that make their communities so special, and that make every one of them a winner.”

In making its decision on the three pilot places, the Great Places Citizen Advisory Board examined the dimensions each offer was asked to address: a unique sense of place; engaging experiences, a rich, diverse social fabric; a vital, creative economy; a pleasing environment; a strong foundation; and a creative culture. The board also looked at each offer’s level of readiness to move forward with implementation.

The Clinton offer calls for expanding and improving public spaces in its 12-mile riverfront area to produce a Grand Promenade extending from the South Bridge Area to Eagle Point Park. It includes the Clinton Sawmill Heritage Experience, North River Drive, Lyons Historical District and Eagle Point Park

The Coon Rapids offer encompasses a number of features found in its natural environment, including a 4,300 acre Whiterock Conservancy that stretches through eight miles of pasture, timber, prairie and wetlands and offers hiking, fishing, bird watching, trail riding, canoeing and other outdoor activities.

Sioux City’s offer focuses on making a better connection among five key elements of its downtown area: the “front door” riverfront access; the yards; Floyd Boulevard Local Foods Market; historic 4th Street and the proposed Sioux City School of Architecture. The offer proposed 17 projects to be completed over the next five years.

The Great Places initiative was launched by Governor Vilsack earlier this year as a challenge to Iowans to be bold and creative as they transform what is unique, genuine and

#### Citizen Advisory Board:

Bill Menner  
Chair  
Grinnell

Robin Anderson  
Vice-Chair  
Mason City

David Bernstein  
Sioux City

Claire Celsi  
Des Moines

Samantha Erickson  
Pleasant Hill

Mark Ginsberg  
Iowa City

Tom Hanafan  
Council Bluffs

Quentin Hart  
Waterloo

Terry Lynch  
Marion

Gil Spence  
Dubuque

Amanda Styron  
Mount Pleasant

Rita Vargas  
Davenport

Iowa Department of  
Cultural Affairs  
600 E. Locust  
Des Moines, IA 50319

[iowagreatplaces.gov](http://iowagreatplaces.gov)

authentic about Iowa into great places for people to live and visit.

More than 1,000 Iowans attended Great Places forums all across the state in May and June. By the July 1, 2005 deadline, 146 places from 94 counties submitted invitations to the state to partner with them to become Great Places. More than 75 trained coaches from about 20 state agencies were deployed in teams throughout Iowa this past summer to work with places on their visions and offer presentations.